(c) and (d) Three persons were arrested in connection with two out of three cases reported during 1999. However, no arrest has been so far made in regard to the four cases reported during the current year. These cases are at various stages of investigation and the efforts to identity and apprehend the culprits continue.

Talks with active terrorist groups

†3412. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) wheter Government have offered to hold talks with active terrorist groups in the country for resolving the problem of terrorism;

(b) if so, the names of the terrorist groups which were offered to hold talks with Government;

(c) when the offer was made and what were the reasons for selecting this very time for making the offer; and

(d) other matters included in the offer?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (d) During his visit to Jammu and Kashmir on 26-27 July, 1997, the then Prime Minister had made an appeal to the misguided youth of the State, who have joined the militant ranks, to give up their guns, and said that the Government was prepared to have unconditional talks with them, to enable them to rejoin the mainstream. The Government is committed to the said offer of talks, within the constitutional frame work.

The Prime Minister of India had spelt out the parameters for initiating a peace dialogue with militant outfilts in the North East on 15 April, 1998 at Guwahati declaring:

"To all those who have strayed from the paths of togetherness, whether in Assam or other States of the North East, I extend an invitation; come foward; let us discuss, my Government is committed to holding talks, to a restoration of peace; let us do so within the four corners of our Constitution".

Cease fire and peace talks with the NSCN(IM) are underway since 1 August, 1997. Suspension of operations with the Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) was also announced earlier this year. NSCN(K) have also issued a Press Release Offering a formal "cease fire' with the Government of India and political talks.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The offer for talks have been made by the Government in view of its commitment of resolve all issues through negotiations. The Government are firmly of the view that violence has no place in a democratic polity and the people by and large want peace and an end to violence.

Pre-1953 status for J&K

†3413. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned Advani's remark on pre-1953 status of J&K hailed published in the 'Daily Observer' dated 8th April, 2000;

(b) if so, whether Government has expressed its consent to consider the offer regarding status of Jammu & Kashmir as in 1953;

(c) if so, when; and

(d) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) The State Government of Jammu & Kashmir have endorsed the recommendations of the State Autonomy Committee set up by the State Government, which basically speaks of going back to pre-1953 status. Government of India has decided to set up a Committee of secretaries to comprehensively examine the report.

College girl raped in Bihar

3414. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item titled She celebrated Women's day, then died of gangrape as appeared in the "Indian Express' dated 15th March, 2000;

(b) whether the number of rape cases in Bihar State has zoomed up from 1034 in 1995 to 2010 in 1999;

(c) if so, the action taken in this regard;

(d) whether the collage girl was gangraped on 11th March, 2000 in the locality barely three days after she had participated in a rally held by her collage to observe International Women's Day; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.